

# COMMITMENT



Texas Department of Health  
Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program

April 1999

Volume 8, Number 4

## BCCCP Begins African American Initiative

**B**reast cancer mortality rates among African American women have been increasing at a modest rate for many years according to the American Cancer Society, 1996. African American women are least likely to survive five years after the diagnosis of breast cancer and African American women are more likely to die from breast cancer than white women.

Because of this, the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) began an initiative to provide breast cancer screening services to more African American women. The initiative prioritizes African American women in Houston, Dallas/Fort Worth and Northeast Texas. These areas were prioritized because 70 percent of all breast cancers detected in African American women in Texas are detected in these areas according to the Texas Cancer Data Center.

The initiative focuses on creating a community-based approach to breast cancer screening. By including partners from the community and identifying community leaders, BCCCP hopes to reach larger numbers of African American

women for breast and cervical cancer screening. This initiative will partner with other activities of the American Cancer Society, Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, and a University of Texas School of

[Initiative continued on page 4](#)

## BCCCP Welcomes New Provider

**T**he University of Texas Health Center (UTHC) at Tyler, is the newest provider of Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) services.

UTHC will work closely with the National Black Leadership Initiative

on Cancer (NBLIC) to provide screening to African American women in the Tyler area. NBLIC will kickoff screening activities on April 12<sup>th</sup>. This screening project is funded as part of the African American Women and Breast Cancer Initiative.

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**BCCCP Welcomes New Provider--** BCCCP recently trained staff with NBLIC on the Program. Pictured (*left to right*) are Claudia Himes, R.N., Nurse Consultant, BCCCP; Carolyn Harvey, Ph.D., NBLIC; Andrea Littlefield, Information Specialist, BCCCP; Judith Blevins, R.N., Tyler-Smith County Public Health District; Capt. Shirley McKellar, NBLIC; Barbara Bradley, NBLIC; and Maj. Rose Hazlett, NBLIC.

## BCCCP Briefs

### Announcement:



Congratulations to Kathy Kokel, Contract Specialist, on the birth of her son Jason. She will be on maternity leave until May 15, 1999. If you have any billing or contract questions, while Kathy is away please contact your team leader at 800-452-1955.

### Training:

The National Teleconference on **"Race, Poverty, Health and Health Care in the New Millennium"**, is set for Tuesday, April 27, 1999. The cost to downlink is \$395. For more information, contact Renee Middleton, Ph.D., Auburn University at (334) 844-2248.

**"Texas Women: Building Health Solutions for the New Millennium"** is a statewide women's health conference for health and social service providers, community advocates, and government officials. The conference is scheduled for April 29 - May 1, 1999 at the Doubletree Hotel, Houston. For more information on registration, call (512) 474-2166.

### Who to Call & How to Reach Us...

#### General Information/Administration:

Margaret Méndez Robert Reeves  
Lurah Scott Rhonnda Jones

#### Professional Education, Clinical

#### Services, Case Management:

Karen Knox Karen McAnarney  
Claudia Himes

#### Public Information and Outreach:

Stephen Wright Andrea Littlefield

#### Data Collection and Maintenance:

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#### Cancer Epidemiology/Demographics:

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email: margaret.mendez (or other staff first name, period and last name)@tdh.state.tx.us

### Website Address

<http://www.tdh.state.tx.us/bcccp/>

### Local Changes

Please call or write Rhonnda Jones, Administrative Technician, with **ANY** changes in local phone numbers, personnel or providers. *Thank you.*

## Cervical Cancer Screening Changes

One of the components of the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) is cervical cancer screening. Cervical cancer remains the ninth leading cause of cancer deaths for women in the United States. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is currently considering a change in their screening policy for cervical cancer.

Several areas of the current policy are being considered for changes. The first issue will be recommendations on changing screening intervals. The current guideline allows a Pap test to be performed less frequently after three or more normal annual tests. This is at the discretion of the physician.

The second issue is regarding age

screening limits. The World Health Organization (WHO) reports that postponing the onset of screening until age 25 may be more cost-effective than current screening practices.

The third area of discussion is new technology for cervical cancer screening. The technologies include automated Pap testing and liquid-based slide preparations. CDC is considering whether to reimburse for these new screening procedures.

BCCCP is forming a workgroup to discuss the above issues and other issues surrounding cervical cancer screening. If you have comments or questions on the items, contact Margaret Méndez, Program Director, at 800-452-1955.

## Claudia Himes Appointed to Committee

Claudia Himes, R.N., Nurse Consultant with the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP), was appointed to the national advisory committee of the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation's African American Women's Initiative (AAWI).

"I am honored to be representing BCCCP and Texas on this committee," said Himes. "I know we can make a difference in the lives of African American women."

The AAWI is represented by a national advisory committee made up of experts and other leaders from the African American community. The top priority of the AAWI is to identify breast health education and

outreach programs that make an impact on the African American community and can be replicated nationwide.

For more information about the committee, contact Claudia Himes, R.N., Nurse Consultant, at (800) 452-1955.



Claudia Himes, R.N., Nurse Consultant with Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program.

## Ask The Expert

Don't forget, **you** can submit your own questions on any subject related to the program such as nursing, case management, billing, data or outreach. Send questions to Andrea Littlefield, Information Specialist, 1100 West 49th Street, Austin, TX 78756-3199.

**Q** What is a batch sheet and is it always necessary to send one when submitting data forms to the State office?

**A** A batch sheet is the cover document that accompanies data forms sent in by providers and **IS** necessary. Providers record the number of each type of form being submitted (D19B, D19C, D23, D24) on a batch sheet to assure that the State office accounts for the correct number of forms. Errors in the logging-in of forms is more likely when a batch sheet is not included with a submission.

## Provider Quality Assurance Meeting

**T**he next provider quality assurance (PQA) meeting for the Breast and Cervical Cancer Control Program (BCCCP) will be held on Thursday, April 29, 1999. The providers attending in Austin will be:

- ◆ Don & Sybil Harrington  
Cancer Center - Amarillo
- ◆ UTMB - McAllen
- ◆ YWCA of Lubbock

Registration forms for all other providers to attend the PQA meeting by video conferencing were distributed in the March monthly packet. All providers should have received

confirmation as to where they are registered to attend the meeting. The meeting agenda and handouts should be received by providers no later than the week of April 19. Meeting minutes will be distributed in the May monthly packet.

Previous evaluations of the PQA meetings have expressed that providers receive great benefits from this type of meeting. Evaluations are important in improving subsequent meetings.

If you have further questions, agenda items or suggestions, contact Wanda Gibson, Public Health Technician, at 800-452-1955.

## Studies Show Benefits of Combined Treatments

**T**he National Cancer Institute (NCI) announced that strong consideration should be given to combining chemotherapy with radiation therapy in the treatment of invasive cervical cancer.

The findings of five different studies, all large randomized clinical trials, show that women in the studies benefitted from the use of radiation therapy and chemotherapy given together. Up to now, surgery or radiation therapy alone has been considered standard treatment for cervical cancer that has spread locally (within the cervix) or regionally (within the pelvis).

"The findings of these five trials are remarkably consistent," said NCI Director Richard D. Klausner, M.D. "They are likely to change the standard for invasive cervical cancer."

Three of the studies cited in NCI's clinical announcement will appear in the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

### Reference:

Cancer Information Service, *Update*, March, 1999

## Minority Cancer Awareness Week April 18 - 24

**Take photos during your Minority Cancer Awareness Week activities! Then send them to Andrea Littlefield, Information Specialist, at the State office. We will publish photos in an upcoming issue of Commitment.**

## Mother's Day Activities

Mother's Day is May 9! Here are some suggestions for promotional opportunities in your community.

### Blockbuster Video

The City of Laredo is partnering with a local Blockbuster Video store. Any woman who rents any video will receive a certificate for a free clinical breast examination. The City of Laredo will then conduct eligibility screenings and enroll

eligible women in the Program. Women who are not eligible, will be referred to Mercy Women's Clinic or another local provider.

### US Postal Service

The U.S. Postal Service plans special promotions for Mother's Day using the breast cancer awareness stamp. The stamp has already raised over \$5 million. Call your local post office to ask about partnering opportunities.

## Health Care Guides Available

The Agency for Health Care Policy and Research (AHCPR) recently released two pocket-sized guides containing the latest recommendations for the prevention or early detection of illnesses such as breast cancer, heart disease and lead poisoning. The

guides, Personal Health Guide and Child Health Guide, are available in English and Spanish.

Health care providers may order up to 200 copies of each guide free of charge. To order the guides, call 800-358-9295.

### Initiative continued from 1

Nursing project funded by the Texas Cancer Council. All BCCCP providers are strongly encouraged to make extraordinary efforts to serve more African American

women.

For more information about the initiative, contact Andrea Littlefield, Information Specialist, at 800-452-1955.

## Important Dates

### April

- April - Cancer Control Month  
Contact American Cancer Society for more information
- April 18-24 - Minority Cancer Awareness Week
- April 21 - San Jacinto Day  
Skeleton Crew at State office
- April 28- Due date for Continuation Funding Applications
- April 28 - New federal Mammography Quality Standards Regulations effective
- April 29- Provider Quality Assurance Meeting

### May

- May - National Melanoma/ Skin Cancer Detection and Prevention Month
- May - National Osteoporosis Prevention Month
- May 9 - Mother's Day
- May 31 - Memorial Day  
State office Closed
- May 31 - World No Tobacco Day

Women Served\*:  
110,349

Breast Screenings:  
135,162

Cervical Screenings:  
100,907

Breast Cancers:  
699

Cervical Carcinoma in situ:  
1507

Invasive Cervical Cancer:  
51

\*As of March 15, 1999

## Commitment

### A monthly bulletin

Send news/information to:

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 Email: andrea.littlefield@tdh.state.tx.us

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED